

# Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Regarding Physical Activity in Nursing and Midwifery Students

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Received 2015 December 27; Revised 2016 April 16; Accepted 2016 May 29.

## Abstract

**Background:** There are some mediators that affect physical activity such as knowledge and attitude. Some barriers such as lack of time, bad environments may impede doing physical activities. It sounds that lack of time is a common barrier to do physical activity in nursing and midwifery students. Since they encounter some factors that affect their health, this knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) study may be helpful to maintain and improve their health.

**Objectives:** The current study aimed to explore the knowledge, attitude and practice related to physical activity in nursing and midwifery students.

**Patients and Methods:** By simple randomized sampling method, 200 subjects were enrolled in the study. Based on the international physical activity questionnaire (IPAQ), a standard checklist was used to gather the related data. Then, the data were analyzed by SPSS software in 95% confidence interval (CI).

**Results:** Mean and standard deviation of subjects' attitude was  $5.9 \pm 3.1$  (minimum: -3, maximum: 14, median: 6). There was no significant difference in the means of knowledge and attitude between genders, and also between nursing and midwifery students. There was significant difference only regarding walking ( $P = 0.017$ ), stretching ( $P = 0.050$ ) and body building ( $P = 0.040$ ) between the students in 95% CI.

**Conclusions:** Based on the current study finding, planning is needed to increase KAP of the students regarding physical activity. Some types of physical activity are more attractive than others for males and females separately, yet it is important to encourage the nursing and midwifery students to examine a variety of physical activities and help them find suitable activities.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Physical Activity

## 1. Background

The physical activity guidelines for Americans (PAG) are an essential resource for health professionals and policymakers. Based on the latest science, they provide guidance on how children and adults can improve their health through physical activity (1, 2). Adults who are physically active are healthier and less likely to develop many chronic diseases compared to the inactive ones regardless of their gender or ethnicity. Based on the recommendations, adults need to do; a) 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity each week (such as brisk walking or tennis), b) 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity each week (such as jogging or swimming laps) (3, 4). In adults aged 18 - 64, physical activity includes leisure time physical activity (for example: walking, dancing, gardening, hiking, swimming), transporta-

tion (e.g. walking or cycling), occupational (i.e. work), household chores, play games, sports or planned exercise, in the context of daily, family and community activities. In order to improve cardio-respiratory and muscular fitness, bone health and reduce the risk of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and depression (5, 6). There are some mediators that affect physical activity such as knowledge and attitude. Some barriers such as lack of time and bad environments may impede doing physical activities (6, 7). Nursing and midwifery students, candidates for bachelor of science, should pass 138 credit units in four years. It sounds that lack of time is a common barrier of doing physical activities in such students.

## 2. Objectives

The current study aimed to explore the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding physical activity in nursing